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ABSTRACT

This paper uses 1980 Census data to assess the patterns of population redistribution and migration of Asian Americans. Analyzing migration flows, it argues that Asian Americans who immigrated to the United States before 1975 followed a national trend of regional population shift from the Northeast and the North Central to the West and South. However, it is asserted that heavy immigration exerts a strong inverse effect on the redistribution of this population; in 1980, as compared to 1970, it is determined, the West declined in its proportion of Asian population, while the Northeast and the South gained. With the exception of Japanese Americans, all major Asian American groups are said to be much more mobile than Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics, especially in terms of long-distance mobility. It is hypothesized that variations in mobility among individual Asian American groups are related to their length of settlement in the United States, and their level of current immigration. Finally, Asian Americans, who have long been a highly urbanized population, are generally thought now to be settling in suburbs rather than central cities, a point which could not be clarified with the available data. The remainder of this paper contains five statistical tables: (1) Asian Population: 1980 and 1970; (2) Regional Population Distribution by Race, 1980 and 1970; (3) Regional Population Movement by Race and Spanish Origin, 1975-1980; (4) Types of Geographic Mobility by Race and Spanish Origin, 1975-1980; and (5) Migration Streams by Race and Spanish Origin, 1975-1980. (KH)

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POPULATION REDISTRIBUTION AND MIGRATION OF ASIAN AMERICANS, 1970-1980

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It is well recognized that the regional population shift from the Northeast and the North Central to the West and the Sunbelt, and the migration reversal and its consequential population turnaround to nonmetropolitan areas are two of the most significant demographic events in the U.S. during the 1970s (Population Reference Bureau, 1982). Although both events have been well researched for the total population as the Whites, information on race differentials is relatively scarce besides the usual White-Black contrasts. Studies on Asian Americans are even more scanty, if not none at all.

The Asian American population was the most rapidly growing group in the U.S. during the past decade. Its size grew from less than 1.5 million in 1970 to about 3.5 million in 1980, a more than twofold quantum-jump (Table 1). While it is well known that most Asian groups in the U.S. are highly urbanized people, little is known about the recent trends as the rapid increase has dramatic effects on the composition and distribution of this population. Early Asian immigrants (i.e., the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Filipino) predominantly settled in the Western states and gradually moved eastward and to the cities as they encountered severe racial discrimination. Is this direction of movement continuing in the contemporary U.S. demographic scene, or is the regional movement of the Asian Americans following the national trend? The rapid increase of Asian Americans is predominantly attributed to immigration. To what extent immigration affects the regional distribution of this population? its subgroups? Are the Asian Americans more mobile than other racial groups? Is there significant variations among individual

Asian American groups in this demographic process? With the 1980 census data available, this paper attempts to seek answers or partial answers to the above questions.

Data come from the 1980 Census Microdata one percent B and C samples as well as the one-in-one-thousand (1/1,000) B and C samples. The one-in-one-thousand samples are used for the larger racial/ethnic groups, namely the Whites, the Blacks and the Hispanics (Spanish Origin population), whereas for the Asian Americans, larger samples are needed in order to yield sufficient number of cases. The B and C samples have different scheme of geographic identification: the B samples provide information on region, state and county levels; the C samples identifies migration streams in relation to SMSA-nonSMSA classifications.

Table 2 shows the percent distribution of population by the four regions in 1970 and 1980 for the U.S. total population, the Whites, the Blacks and the six largest Asian American groups. For the total U.S. population and the Whites, substantial amount of redistribution from the Northeast and the North Central to the South and the West is evident. For the Black population, the South and the North Central has retained similar proportions in 1980 as in 1970, but the Northeast has lost and the West gained about one percentage point. For the three Asian American groups with comparable data, changes in regional population distribution between 1970 and 1980 reveal a different pattern from the White and the Black populations. Specifically, for all three groups, namely, the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Filipino, the Northeast and the South have gained proportions but the West lost.

Are the Asian Americans really forming a counter stream of

migration from the West to the Northeast? To what extent their regional population distribution is affected by immigration? Tabulations of regional migration flows between 1975 and 1980 and the regional population distribution of immigrants since 1975 enable us to assess the situation (Table 3). As expected, for the Whites and the Blacks, and even the Spanish origin people, the South and the West have the highest retention rates, and with heavy immigration. Counter-streams to the Northeast and the North Central are very weak. Surprisingly, among the Asian Americans, the West also has the highest retention rates, except for the Asian Indians, and it has drawn heavy immigrations from the other three regions. Except for the Asian Indians, the other three regions have retention rates well below 90 percent, suggesting that the population turnover for these regions among Asian Americans is even higher than that for other non-Asian groups. Unlike the other non-Asian groups, there is a moderate counter-stream from the South to the Northeast. Put together these findings and the earlier findings from Table 2, it is obvious that the proportional gain in Asian Americans by the Northeast region is a combined effect of huge influx of new immigrants and negative internal migration. The Asian Americans who were born in the U.S. and who immigrated to the country before 1975, apparently followed closely the national population shift to the West and the South. The regional distribution of new immigrants, although still favors the West region, tends to have a balancing effect on the extremely skewness (predominantly concentrated in the West) of earlier distributions.

Furthermore, there are several remarkable features among individual Asian American groups: the Chinese and the Koreans have

moderately strong migration streams from the South and the North Central to the Northeast; among the Asian Indians, the strongest streams are flowing to the South instead of the West.

It is well established in the literature of migration that the White and the Black populations differ significantly in terms of types of migration as well as distance of migration. The Whites are in general more mobile and more likely to make long distance moves whereas the Blacks tend to move more frequently within short distances. Our tabultions on types of mobility by race and Spanish origin for 1975-1980, as shown in Table 4, lend support to the literature. Table 4 also indicates that the Hispanics are even more mobile than the Whites, because of their extremely high intra-county mobility, but their long-distance migration rates (i.e., inter-county, inter-state, and inter-region migration) resemble the Blacks' patterns. Findings on the Asian Americans are especially revealing. With the distinct exception of the Japanese Americans, all other major Asian American groups have mobility rates way above the three non-Asian groups. The Asian-non-Asian differences in mobility rates are most evident in long distance moves, namely, inter-county, inter-state, and inter-region migration. For intra-county mobility, the Asian Americans' rates are higher than that for the Whites, but not necessarily higher than that for the Blacks and the Hispanics, depending on individual groups. Among the Asian groups, the Koreans are conspicuously mobile, with less than 28 percent staying in the same house in 1980 as in 1975, and for each type of mobility, they have the highest rates among all groups. In order of their mobility rates, the Asian Americans groups rank as: Korean, Asian Indian, Filipino, Chinese, and Japanese.

The Japanese Americans' immobility deserves a brief discussion. As can be seen from Table 4, as high as 63.6 percent are staying in the same house in 1980 as in 1975. Although this figure includes those who did not move during the 5 year period, and those who moved, but by 1980 has returned to their 1975 residence, usually the latter constitute just a small proportion. At the other end of the migration types, a rate of 3.6 percent of inter-region migration is the lowest among all groups. Possible explanations for the deviated Japanese Americans' pattern of mobility might be numerous. The crucial ones include:

1. Among the Asian immigrants, the Japanese Americans are the most established and assimilated, and are widely recognized as successful in attaining middle class socioeconomic status (Kiefer, 1974; Kitano, 1976). This means their location-specific capital in their place of residence may be well accumulated. In view of the axiom of cumulative inertia, naturally they are much less mobile than other less-assimilated Asian groups.

2. Recent immigrants tend to move around more frequently than established immigrants and natives, in order to search for and maximize their economic opportunity in the new land. Japanese immigration to the U.S. in the recent decades, however, are extremely low compared with other Asian groups.

3. Their lowest inter-region mobility may be partially due to the fact that they are heavily concentrated in the West region (Table 2), predominantly in the state of California.

The Asian Americans are also characterized by high inter-SMSA and intra-SMSA mobility, again with the exception of the Japanese Americans (Table 5). It is also observed that among the eight race/ethnic groups

included in Table 5, the Whites are the only one with more SMSA-to-nonSMSA migration (3.6 percent of entire population) than its counter stream (3.3 percent). For the Asian American groups as well as the Blacks and the Hispanics, metropolitan-bound migration is a much stronger stream. The Asians in the U.S. have long been a highly urbanized population. The present findings suggest that they continue to be so, even at a faster rate of urbanization, in the near future. However, it is generally believed that the Asian Americans, especially the emerging middle class, tend to settle down in the suburbs rather than in the central cities. But the SMSA classification scheme of our data does not allow us to examine this issue in more scrutiny.

SUMMARY

Based on the 1980 Census data, the patterns of population redistribution and migration of Asian Americans have been assessed. Analysis of migration flows has revealed that Asian Americans follwed the national trend of regional population shift from the Northeast and the North Central to the West and the South. However, the heavy immigration exerts a strong inverse effect on the regional redistribution of this population: compared to 1970, the West region in 1980 lost proportions while the Northeast and the South gained. With the remarkable exception of the Japanese Americans, all major Asian American groups are found to be much more mobile than the Whites, the Blacks, and the Hispanics, especially in terms of long-distance mobility, namely, inter-county, inter-state, and inter-region migration. It is hypothesized that variations in mobility among individual Asian American groups are related to the length of

settlement in the U.S. of the group, and its level of current immigration. Finally, the Asian Americans are also characterized by high inter-SMSA, intra-SMSA, and nonmetro-metro mobilities.

Table 1. Asian Population: 1980 and 1970

Nationality	1970	1980	Percent increase 1970-1980
Total Asian population	1,426,148	3,466,421	143%
Chinese	431,583	812,178	88%
Filipino	336,731	781,894	132%
Japanese	588,324	716,331	22%
Asian Indian	--	387,223	--
Korean*	69,510	357,393	414%
Vietnamese	--	245,025	--
Other Asians	--	166,377	--

*The 1970 data on the Korean population excluded the State of Alaska
-- not available

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Census, Asian and Pacific Islander population by State = 1980, Supplementary Report PC80-S1-12, p.2 (data based on sample).

Washington, D.C. = U.S. Government Printing Office

Table 2. Regional Population Distribution by Race, 1980 and 1 0

Region	U.S.	White	Black	Chinese	Filipino	Japanese	Asian Indian	Korean	Vietnamese
1980									
Northeast	21.7	22.5	18.3	27.0	9.7	6.7	33.4	19.2	9.5
North Central	26.0	27.7	20.1	9.0	10.3	6.3	23.6	17.5	14.0
South	33.3	31.3	53.0	11.2	10.7	6.4	23.1	19.8	30.7
West	19.1	18.5	8.5	52.7	69.3	80.6	19.9	43.4	45.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1970									
Northeast	24.1	24.9	19.2	26.6	9.2	6.6	--	--	--
North Central	27.8	29.1	20.2	9.0	8.1	7.2	--	--	--
South	30.9	28.4	53.0	7.9	9.3	5.2	--	--	--
West	17.1	17.7	7.5	56.5	73.4	81.0	--	--	--
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	--	--	--

-- Data not available

SOURCES: Compiled from U.S. Bureau of the Census, General Population Characteristics, United States Summary (PC80-1-B1), Table 52. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Table 3. Regional Population Movement by Race and Spanish Origin, 1975-1980

Race/Spanish Origin/ 1975 Region	1980 Region				
	Northeast	North Central	South	West	Total (N)
WHITE, non-SPANISH					
Northeast	93.7	0.8	3.8	1.7	100.0 (19,908)
North Central	0.7	93.5	3.5	2.3	100.0 (24,384)
South	1.1	1.7	95.8	1.4	100.0 (25,194)
West	0.8	2.0	3.3	94.0	100.0 (14,323)
Outside U.S.	21.3	18.3	33.3	27.1	100.0 (892)
BLACK, non-SPANISH					
Northeast	93.0	0.7	4.7	1.6	100.0 (2,191)
North Central	0.6	94.4	2.9	2.1	100.0 (2,488)
South	0.7	0.9	97.4	0.9	100.0 (6,183)
West	0.4	2.2	4.5	92.9	100.0 (972)
Outside U.S.	26.8	4.2	57.0	12.0	100.0 (142)
SPANISH ORIGIN					
Northeast	93.5	0.6	4.7	1.2	100.0 (1,121)
North Central	0.8	89.3	7.5	2.4	100.0 (495)
South	0.3	0.7	96.4	2.7	100.0 (1,841)
West	0.2	0.5	1.8	97.4	100.0 (2,437)
Outside U.S.	23.8	11.3	21.9	43.1	100.0 (585)
ASIAN					
Northeast	87.2	3.4	3.6	5.8	100.0 (2,065)
North Central	3.0	82.6	5.3	9.1	100.0 (1,244)
South	3.4	2.3	85.7	8.7	100.0 (1,220)
West	0.4	0.8	1.4	97.5	100.0 (6,607)
Outside U.S.	18.7	14.7	19.5	47.1	100.0 (3,848)
CHINESE					
Northeast	90.1	3.0	1.9	5.0	100.0 (855)
North Central	6.2	78.1	2.6	13.1	100.0 (274)
South	5.7	2.6	84.7	7.0	100.0 (229)
West	0.2	0.4	1.4	98.0	100.0 (1,385)
Outside U.S.	21.8	11.0	14.6	52.6	100.0 (789)
FILIPINO					
Northeast	85.8	1.9	2.8	9.6	100.0 (324)
North Central	0.7	79.9	10.4	9.0	100.0 (268)
South	0.7	3.4	81.0	14.9	100.0 (268)
West	0.4	1.0	1.1	97.5	100.0 (1,853)
Outside U.S.	8.9	12.9	13.5	64.8	100.0 (801)
JAPANESE					
Northeast	88.0	1.3	3.8	7.0	100.0 (158)
North Central	1.2	87.3	4.8	6.6	100.0 (166)
South	3.2	3.2	80.0	13.5	100.0 (185)
West	0.4	0.3	0.6	98.7	100.0 (2,606)
Outside U.S.	23.7	11.8	8.5	56.1	100.0 (355)

Table 3. Regional Population Movement by Race and Spanish Origin, 1975-1980

Race/Spanish Origin/ 1975 Region	1980 Region				
	Northeast	North Central	South	West	Total (N)
ASIAN INDIAN					
Northeast	85.5	5.2	7.0	2.4	100.0 (503)
North Central	4.3	90.0	3.2	2.5	100.0 (279)
South	1.6	1.6	94.7	2.0	100.0 (244)
West	0.0	4.2	7.5	88.3	100.0 (240)
Outside U.S.	37.4	23.1	25.0	14.5	100.0 (532)
KOREAN					
Northeast	81.3	5.2	3.6	9.9	100.0 (192)
North Central	2.1	82.6	6.2	9.2	100.0 (195)
South	6.3	1.0	84.9	7.8	100.0 (205)
West	0.7	1.7	3.5	94.0	100.0 (403)
Outside U.S.	19.5	16.2	22.7	41.6	100.0 (666)

Data on Asian Americans are from the 1980 Census 1 percent B Sample; data on other groups are from the one-in-one-thousand (1/1,000) B sample. Data for the Vietnamese are not shown due to small sample size.

Table 4. Types of Geographic Mobility by Race and Spanish Origin, 1975-1980

Types of Mobility	White	Black	Spanish Origin	Asian	Chinese	Filipino	Japanese	Asian Indian	Korean
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83,284)	(11,865)	(5,979)	(11,272)	(2,843)	(2,862)	(3,088)	(1,233)	(915)
NO MOVE/SAME HOUSE	54.4	58.6	50.0	48.3	50.2	42.9	63.6	40.2	27.7
INTRA-COUNTY MOBILITY	24.3	29.0	35.7	28.0	26.3	33.0	22.5	25.2	36.7
INTER-COUNTY MIGRATION	21.3	12.4	14.3	23.7	23.5	24.1	13.9	34.6	35.6
Inter-state	10.4	6.9	6.2	12.4	11.4	12.2	6.9	19.5	18.8
Inter-region	5.7	4.4	4.3	7.4	7.6	7.3	3.6	11.2	12.6

Data on Asian Americans are from the 1980 Census 1 percent B Sample; data on other groups are from the one-in-one-thousand (1/1,000) B sample. Data for the Vietnamese are not shown due to small sample size. Data for Asian Americans are the sum of the six groups including the Vietnamese.

Table 5. Migration Streams by Race and Spanish Origin, 1975-1980

Race/ Spanish Origin	NO MOVE/SAME HOUSE		MIGRATION STREAMS					TOTAL (N)
	In SMSA	Not in SMSA	Intra-SMSA Mobility	Inter-SMSA Mobility	SMSA-to-non SMSA	non-SMSA-to-SMSA	Mobility in non SMSA	
White	39.3	15.1	21.1	9.2	3.6	3.3	8.6	100.0 (83,284)
Black	45.8	12.8	27.2	6.1	1.5	2.3	4.5	100.0 (11,865)
Spanish Origin	42.7	7.3	32.0	8.2	1.2	4.1	4.6	100.0 (5,979)
Asian	44.0	4.3	28.8	13.0	1.7	5.6	2.5	100.0 (11,272)
Chinese	48.6	1.6	29.8	14.0	0.8	4.4	0.9	100.0 (2,843)
Filipino	38.7	4.2	32.4	13.6	1.8	6.8	2.6	100.0 (2,862)
Japanese	56.5	7.1	20.4	7.7	1.5	3.4	3.5	100.0 (3,088)
Asian Indian	34.8	5.4	30.6	17.4	3.9	5.2	2.6	100.0 (1,233)
Korean	25.1	2.6	39.2	18.5	1.3	10.2	3.2	100.0 (915)

Data on Asian Americans are from the 1980 Census 1 persent C Sample; data on other groups are from the one-in-one-thousand (1/1,000) C Sample. Data for the Vietnamese are not shown due to small sample size. Data for Asian Americans are the sum of the six groups including the Vietnamese.

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